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EDUCATIONAL WRITINGS

Any adequate review of educational writings must take account of the fact that there are published in the United States more than a hundred education periodicals. The directory of the Commission of Education gives a list of a hundred and twelve such periodicals ranging from quarterly to weekly publications. The possibilities which are presented in this long list of periodicals are so distracting that it frequently is difficult or quite impossible for the individual teacher to secure the kind of reading-matter which is most helpful in organizing his work, because this matter is distributed through so many different publications.

One might begin a survey of these journals by commenting on the state journals. Almost every state has an educational journal and in some of the states two or three local journals try to occupy the field. These journals are commonly characterized by the news notes which they contain and by the reviews which they give of the questions used by the local school authorities in teachers' examinations and examinations of students. It is customary for such local journals to give in every issue a series of answers to the questions employed at the last examination. The rest of the reading-matter is made up of editorials which may in some cases deal with local educational issues but in general deal in a large and platitudinous way with broad educational matters. Then follow extracts from educational books and addresses. Indeed, one may say that the chief sources of material for such journals are educational meetings where inspirational addresses are presented by speakers who have prepared very little for the occasion and have very little to say that is either new or significant. Finally, such journals usually contain several pages of devices for teachers to employ in classroom work. These devices frequently relate themselves to the seasonal celebrations that are imminent at the time of the publication of the particular issue.

It may be that these local journals serve a valuable purpose, but one has difficulty, as he tries from month to month to discover

in them something really significant for the teaching profession, in understanding why teachers spend their money for many of them. If one goes to local institutes and sees the methods by which subscriptions for these journals are secured, he realizes that a great deal of pressure is brought to bear upon teachers to show loyalty for local publications. It is very frequently promised that these journals will give a survey of all of the important interests that are being developed in education throughout the country. Contrasting these journals with the publications of other professions, it must be admitted that the teaching profession is badly represented by the trivial and personal character of most of what appears. There ought to be some combination of these journals. The National Education Association is the natural center from which some serious, general school journal should issue. So long as the matter is left to private enterprises or is carried on in a purely local way, educational journalism will continue to give the most striking evidence of the lack of organization of the American teaching profession. One does not get in these journals any serious reviews of educational literature. One does not get a discussion of the larger issues of education.

Furthermore, the example which is set by the type of articles which commonly appear in these journals is so bad that the teaching profession may be said to lack, more than any other profession in the country, the ability to record its experiences and discoveries. One finds that a serious superintendent or principal who has a good method which he has worked out in his school is afraid to describe it for some educational journal for fear that he will be regarded as self-seeking and as an advertiser. The scientific spirit which prevails in medical publications and in publications which are used by lawyers has not yet manifested itself in the teaching profession. The editors of this *Journal* have frequently had occasion to comment on the difficulty of getting teachers to write in an impersonal way about school experiences. This difficulty is very largely to be charged to the character of present-day educational periodicals.

In sharp contrast to these local journals are serious scientific journals which try to get together studies, particularly those of a type which are worked out in scientific laboratories. This material

is commonly looked upon by practical school people as "heavy" and "unpractical." It is indeed impossible to make use of many of these studies in classroom work and in school organization. They represent the remoter, scientific principles which will have to be indirectly brought over into school processes. The taste for this sort of material has to be cultivated through a study of the sciences related to education. The criticism which is legitimately to be made of many such studies is that their authors have not attempted to point out the possible applications of their studies. The articles are unnecessarily remote from the sphere of interest of the ordinary teacher and superintendent. There is no reason at all why a practical science like applied psychology or applied sociology should not consciously aim to make its results accessible to all who are working in the practical field. Up to this time there has been very little of this conscious effort to make scientific studies appear to the ordinary reader available for his immediate task.

The earliest of the rigidly scientific publications is the *Pedagogical Seminary*, published at Clark University. This periodical has printed a very large body of material in its twenty-one volumes. It represents today a somewhat modified but ever vigorous form of the Child-Study Movement which has long been characteristic of Clark University.

A second publication containing much serious material is the *Teachers' College Record*. This publication has passed through fourteen volumes and has contained a great variety of articles, both for the elementary teacher and for the secondary teacher. It is not so much a journal as a series of monographs. Each issue is a unit in itself, and in many cases a unit supplies material which special teachers can use without reference to other issues of the *Record*.

The *Journal of Educational Psychology* is a younger member of this group of periodicals. It is published by psychologists who are interested in working out applications of their science to practical school problems. It is published in Baltimore by Warwick & York. Many of its articles relate to elementary-school work.

Three other journals may be mentioned in this connection, although they differ somewhat in type from the three that have

already been commented upon. The *Educational Review*, which is now in its forty-seventh volume, has long been known as a general educational periodical, discussing in a broad way problems of the higher schools. From time to time it includes matter which is relevant to the elementary school.

The *School Review*, which is in its twenty-second volume, devotes its attention entirely to matters related to the high school, including from time to time articles referring to admission requirements and other such relations between the high school and the college.

In recent years the *School and Home Education* has, especially in its editorial columns, taken on a more scientific character under the editorship of Professor Bagley. This journal was founded by Dr. George Brown and is published in Bloomington, Illinois; it has a long, historical record of influence in the Middle West.

The most striking development in recent educational journalism is the appearance of departmental journals. One can pick out, for example, the two journals which are published from the same center and promote the interests of handwork and vocational work in schools. These are the *Manual Training Magazine* and *Vocational Education*. The first is in its fifteenth volume and the second is in its third. They are published by Mr. Bennett and his associates in Peoria, Illinois.

Home economics has several journals. The journal published by the Home Economics Association is entitled *The Journal of Home Economics* and is in its sixth volume. The Boston Cooking School now publishes its magazine under the title, *American Cookery*. *Good Housekeeping* is a somewhat more popular journal which gives much attention to educational problems as well as to general phases of home-making.

Defective children are receiving, not only in educational publications but in state legislation and in practical school organization, much attention. Three journals may be mentioned as discussing topics relating to the training of defectives. The first is the *Training School Bulletin*, published in Vineland, New Jersey. The second is the *Psychological Clinic*, published by Professor Witmer of the University of Pennsylvania. The third is the

Journal of Psycho-Asthenics, published quarterly by the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-Minded. The first is the organ of one of the most progressive institutions in the United States for the study and treatment of defectives. The second has served as the medium for general discussions of psychological and educational problems; the third as the organ of an association is somewhat less distinctive in character.

Physical education is represented by *Mind and Body*, published in Milwaukee, and the *American Physical Education Review*, published by the American Physical Education Association, as well as by *The Playground*, published in New York by the Playground and Recreation Association of America.

There is a *Kindergarten Review* published by Milton Bradley Company, Springfield, Massachusetts. The *School Arts Magazine* is published in Boston by Mr. Bailey and his associates. The *Nature Study Review* is edited by Professor Downing and published in Chicago. The *English Journal*, published by Professor Hosis and others, is issued from Chicago. *Religious Education*, published under the auspices of the Religious Educational Association of America, is issued in Chicago. The *History Teachers' Magazine* is published in Philadelphia. A new venture is the *Rural Educator*, published in Columbus, Ohio. *School Science and Mathematics* in its fourteenth volume is published in Chicago and makes an appeal chiefly to those who are interested in problems of secondary education. Geography has a whole list of journals devoted to its interests. Of these perhaps the one most used by teachers is a journal which is not edited chiefly for school purposes, namely the *National Geographic Magazine*, which is published in Washington under the auspices of the National Geographic Society.

One might go on mentioning other special journals which aim to promote the interests of various departments, but those listed serve to emphasize the scope of this kind of publication. There are some advantages and some disadvantages in specializing educational publications. The advantages are obvious. Material is created which is of special use to specialists, and the departments concerned are more rapidly advanced than they would be if left to find a place in the miscellaneous publications which include all sorts

of material. Special teachers feel through these journals a closer contact with their departmental allies. On the other hand, the teacher or supervisor who is interested in developing his work on all sides is hindered by the necessity of getting hold of a series of departmental publications. Departmental journals tend to set up in the school distinctions and lines of separation which are harmful to the unity of the educational process. So far as the individual child is concerned, there ought not to be favored, or especially aggressive, departments. Even in the upper grades and in the high school where the work is departmentalized, every student of education realizes that the special teacher must cultivate broad, general interests if his department is to succeed. The separate publications make it increasingly difficult to satisfy this rational demand for unity in the course of study.

There are several journals which are to be classed as national rather than local in their circulation. One of the most interesting of these is the *Journal of Education*, published in Boston under the editorship of Dr. Winship. Dr. Winship is not only an editor; he is also a very active participant in all sorts of educational meetings. He lectures in different parts of the country and spends a large part of his time visiting educational experiments and coming in contact with people engaged in different phases of school work. Dr. Winship finds in the excursions which he makes about the country many interesting school experiments. Some of these he describes with the most unqualified enthusiasm. The result is that those experiments which he indorses are likely to have a large and in some cases an undue recognition. One does not like to be criticized by an educational speaker and writer whose audiences are as extensive as are those of Dr. Winship. Dr. Winship's type of judgment becomes therefore a matter of interest. He has not been converted to a belief in educational surveys and other forms of scientific study of education. His skepticism regarding these activities is in keeping with the general conservative attitude of practical educators in all parts of the country. Dr. Winship is disposed to regard the "expert" as less competent to determine school policies than is the Board of Education. The student of scientific education is disposed to be critical of a publication which

reinforces a skeptical attitude toward scientific methods and brings to such prominent attention experiments that are by no means complete and have not been tested except by personal inspection. On the other hand, such a student of education sees the enormous importance of educational publicity in the influence exercised by a single aggressive editor.

A second journal which has a large national circulation is the *American School Board Journal*, published in Milwaukee. This journal has for some years specialized on problems that are related to supervision. Supervision is a very inviting field for the publisher because if there is any class of school people who have reached the professional stage it is school superintendents and supervisors. The teacher in our public schools is so transient in his tenure of office and so shifting in his actual work and place of residence that he does not gain any large influence over the schools. Furthermore, he is not likely to be in a position to control in any great degree his own practices. Superintendents and supervisors, on the other hand, do exercise a very large influence in the management of schools, and their salaries are high enough so that they can afford to subscribe for journals and can take some part in an influential way in educational meetings. The American School Board has made its appeal to this administrative class and has served a very useful purpose in disseminating information about the educational situation in different parts of the country. Its methods are somewhat different from those of Dr. Winship in that it does not undertake to pass personal judgment upon many of the doings of the schools.

Finally, reference may be made to the *Normal Instructor and Primary Plans*, a journal which has recently united under one cover two publications which were formerly issued separately. It makes an appeal to teachers who need devices for classroom work. Every imaginable kind of aid to classroom work is to be found in this journal. It makes no pretense to a critical or scientific study of educational problems. It is a handbook and a guide for the teacher who needs devices. Such a journal as this has both its value and its danger for the educational profession. The young teacher who finds that she can secure ready-made a large number

of devices each month is very likely to give up preparing material in terms of her own immediate environment and in terms of the needs of the children whom she has in charge. She loses, accordingly, the initiative which she ought to cultivate if she is to be an independent, strong teacher. On the other hand, many a teacher who is not adequately supervised and whose training has not given her the degree of independence which would make possible the preparation of material is greatly aided by the coming once a month of this series of devices.

The general child-welfare movement which is of interest to teachers but includes institutions outside of the school is represented by several publications that deal with various aspects of public care of children. The most pretentious of these publications is a journal entitled *The Child*. This is an English publication, but includes references to the child-welfare movement in America as well as in England. The *Child Labor Bulletin* is published quarterly by the National Child Labor Committee which has its headquarters in New York City. A local publication which shows the enterprise of a single community is the *Child Welfare Bulletin*, published by the Child Welfare League of Peoria, Illinois. This publication contains discussions of many municipal activities which have to do with the children of Peoria and the neighboring country.

One series of publications which should not be omitted in any general catalogue of this type is the series of *Bulletins* published by the Bureau of Education of the United States. The statistical and descriptive information which the Commissioners of Education have collected for many years is unique among civilized nations. The countries of Europe are beginning to imitate the example of the United States in making accessible information about the schools. The Commissioner's *Reports* have gradually increased so that they were becoming unwieldy. Accordingly, a part of the material has in recent years appeared as a series of special studies. These studies deal with all sorts of topics. One may select from the list of 1913 *Bulletins* such important numbers as the following: No. 2, *Training Courses for Rural Teachers*. There are *Monthly Records of Current Publications*. Nos. 6 and 14 deal with *Agriculture Instruction in Secondary Schools*. No. 17 describes *A Trade School for*

Girls. No. 19 gives an account of *German Industrial Education*. Other titles are as follows: No. 20, *Illiteracy in the United States*; No. 23, *The Georgia Club*; No. 31, *Special Features in City School Systems*; No. 32, *Educational Survey of Montgomery County*. One can find topics of interest to all classes of teachers.

These publications are accessible only in small editions because the Bureau is not at the present time supplied with adequate funds for publication. Furthermore, the committees of Congress are not persuaded that publications of this type are demanded by American teachers. Teachers and supervisors will render a distinct service by calling upon the Bureau for those numbers of the *Bulletin* which they can advantageously use. The Bureau will thus get definite reactions from the different parts of the country upon its publications which it can use in securing the necessary funds to carry on this work. At the present time the Bureau is the only agency that is able to print elaborate monographs on various educational topics. The importance of its work in this respect cannot be overestimated. The other publications which have been referred to are dependent upon private enterprise or upon subsidies from institutions. They are so limited in scope that it is almost impossible for serious educational studies to come to light with any degree of promptness. If the Bureau could be supported in its effort to develop a serious body of educational material, it would undoubtedly succeed by this method in raising the tone of all American publications.

If the foregoing review of publications has served its purpose at all, it has called attention to the great importance of the consolidation and organization of these publications. Most teachers do not know how to find out about the journals which they ought to read. Many of them are undoubtedly misled by the energy of aggressive agents who come in contact with them but are not inspired by the desire to serve the teacher's interests in selecting the best possible journal for the teacher to read. The competition that exists between these journals is wasteful in the extreme. The repetitiousness of the publications is very great, and the trivial character of much of the output is obvious to even the casual reader. The struggle for improvement of these journals will undoubtedly go on in its present form until consolidation through associations or

through some central agency such as the Bureau of Education can be effected. In the meantime, teachers can do much to bring about a better state of affairs by making a careful study of the situation before they subscribe for journals. If instead of allowing an agent to sell them journals which do not serve their purposes teachers would canvass the matter with the aid of some such general list as that which we have aimed to present above, or by writing to all of the publications mentioned in the *Educational Directory* of the Commissioner of Education for samples, there would be very shortly a selection of stronger journals and an elimination of the weak, which would be very helpful in reducing the competition and in raising the standards and character of those journals which survive on this comprehensive and comparative basis.

A report¹ of the survey made of the city schools of Springfield is published by the Russell Sage Foundation. Dr. Ayres undertook this survey at the request of the board of education of that city. The survey differs from others which have been made up to this time in the amount of time and energy which was devoted to coming into actual contact with the school. We find the statement, unique in school surveys, that some member of the survey staff visited every class of the city. The report is a complete, general statement of the organization and present conditions of the schools and contains a number of recommendations for changes to be made. The report is also illustrated very fully by diagrams, charts, and pictures, evidently intended to give the people of the city a complete notion of their school system and of its comparative standing among the school systems of the country.

The recommendations which stand out as most conspicuous are those which call for a change in the course of study, bringing it into more intimate relation to the present-day life of the people, and introducing more vocational work. The industrial training should not be theoretical in character but practical, establishing an intimate relation between the children and the school system by allowing them to make the supplies which are needed for the school system. It is also recommended that the upper grades

¹ *The Public Schools of Springfield, Illinois*. Russell Sage Foundation. Pp. 152.

of the elementary school be included in a junior high school, thus reorganizing the high schools as well as the elementary schools of the city. The reasons for all of these recommendations are elaborately set forth in terms of the findings of the survey committee.

Special interest will attach to two features of the report. There is a very full account of the children who are thirteen years of age in the school system. Their home antecedents and their probable vocations are studied so as to show in detail how the opportunities of the school may be adjusted to the needs of these pupils. As a vocational survey of the schools this chapter will be very useful in setting the example to other school systems.

As a second feature, Dr. Ayres has repeated a type of investigation which he has made before. He took some of the material that is being employed for instruction in spelling, geography, and arithmetic directly out of the school program and asked some of the leading citizens of the city to pass an examination on these subjects. The result was that these respectable leaders in the community failed deplorably to exhibit any of the knowledge which the children in the schools were supposed to be accumulating. This is a very vivid way of showing the inadequacy of some of the work done in the schools. It is rather dangerous, however, to commit one's self to the implied theory which lies back of these tests. An ordinary citizen is likely to infer that the surveyor holds that the school ought to deal only with those subjects that can be shown to have direct relation to later life in the person of leading citizens. One could defend some useless words on the ground that they train the pupil in the fundamentals of phonetic analysis. It may be that the school program will sometimes depart from the activities of later life in order systematically to cover all the facts in a certain branch of knowledge, most of which will be forgotten so far as the details are concerned. To be sure, it would be better to find, if possible, examples drawn from the actual life of society. But as a method of determining exactly what kind of material shall be used, this testing of the ordinary citizen is not adequate.

The school survey is a problem which is of interest to all school officers. Many school systems are being surveyed either by their own corps of teachers or by outside agencies. It is very desirable that the movement should be guided by a general discussion of principles and by a clear insight into the lessons which are to be derived from the many surveys which have up to this time been carried on.

The *Yearbook*¹ will be very serviceable in bringing to the attention of all who are interested the various surveys which have been made. Mr. Smith's paper concludes with an excellent bibliography on educational and community surveys. His own discussion makes it clear that there should be a careful outline of each survey before it is undertaken. The list of topics which he gathers from the different surveys as important for consideration will serve as a guide to those who are engaged in organizing such movements.

A brief account of the surveys that have been undertaken up to this time is appended to Mr. Smith's article. This summary was originally prepared for the Committee of the National Council on Tests and Standards of Efficiency.

Two thoroughly typical English books come to hand, one dealing with a system of education,² and the other a textbook on psychology.³

Mr. Whitehouse's book is a familiar type of political document. When Parliament is about to enact new school legislation the various parties get out programs of legislation which are intended to sound the public wishes. We have in this book virtually such a preliminary statement of a party program. If this book excites favorable attention throughout the country, it is likely to be

¹ *The Thirteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*. Part II. "Plans for Organizing School Surveys with a Summary of Typical School Surveys." By H. L. Smith and Charles H. Judd. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pp. 85.

² *A National System of Education*. By John Howard Whitehouse. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 92.

³ *Know Your Own Mind*. By William Glover. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 204.

influential. If not, it has served its purpose of drawing the opinion of people, and the legislation which is ultimately formulated will have the advantage of the preliminary discussions.

Such a book succeeds in presenting in vivid form the current problems of English education. The first and most significant of these problems is the reorganization of the school system in such a way that the elementary school shall lead to higher schools. The parallel system of education in which the children of the poorer classes go to elementary schools and the children of the rich have the advantage of secondary education is breaking down rapidly in a democratic country like England. How to overcome the traditions of the older system is a grave problem. Such matters as the support of the secondary schools must be considered, for at the present time these schools are tuition schools. It is obvious that the selection of students for higher education through the present examination system is by no means satisfactory. The universities evidently do not conform to popular demands, and the discussion of a commission to look into the activities of Oxford and Cambridge is renewed in this preliminary statement of a legislative program. Industrial education and the place of local and central authorities are also pointed out as important problems. As in all of the present-day official discussions of the religious question, the attempt is here made to avoid the bitter partisanship which commonly attaches to these religious discussions.

While Whitehouse's book gives us a view of the problems of legislation, Glover's book presents a most typical example of abstract, theoretical British thinking. Everywhere in England one sees clear evidences that the practical training of teachers is a matter of apprenticeship. The training colleges and university departments are not homes for the cultivation of educational science any more than is the traditional American normal school. When, however, an English writer discusses education in a book he seems to betake himself into another world. He forgets all about the apprenticeship system of training teachers, he forgets children and other people, and writes with such extreme devotion to theory that an American reader has difficulty in understanding how he

came to regard his work as having any connection with practical life.

Mr. Glover has written in this book a very sketchy outline of the kind of psychology which is taught by Sully and Bain and Herbert Spencer. The book contains a few general illustrations, but practically nothing that would be of direct use to teachers. The discussion of the nervous system is reduced to the barest outline, and the nature of apperception is evidently taken up merely because of the traditional interests that education has always had in this concept. The book will be of very little use to the American teacher who is interested in psychology, but it is so typical of the whole English situation that one cannot take the book in hand without realizing that this is nothing more nor less than a perpetuation of the tradition which has grown up in English theoretical writing on psychology and educational topics.